

The Gloucestershire Tragedy ;

Or, The True Lovers' Downfal.

Near Guildford town, I hear,
Of late, in Gloucestershire,
There liv'd a lady fair,
Of beauty bright ;
Her father vastly great,
In money and estate,
Which, most unfortunate,
Ruin'd her quite.
Four thousand pounds a year
Her father had, I hear,
And had no other heir
But this lady ;
And he'd marry her out-right
Unto a rich old knight,
But she the same did flight,
Disdainfully.
Father, she often cry'd,
If that I should be ty'd
To be an old man's bride,
How would this prove ?
If I in marriage bands
Must obey your commands,
Let me, sir, have a man
That I can love.
Her father angry grew,
Saying, Daughter, if you
Will my commands not do,
To pleasure me,
Assured be of this,
That if you wed amiss
Unto my mind,
I'll disinherit you.
For some time this past on,
When a young gentleman,
Who liv'd near at hand,
A-wooing came ;
One thousand pounds a-year
His father had, we hear,
And he is only heir
Unto the same.
When to her father come
His business he made known,
For whose dear alone
He him address ;
Sir, if you'll give, he cry'd,
Your daughter for my bride,
Sure no man e'er beside
Can be more blest.
Her father cunningly
Did make him this reply,
Your suit I'll not deny,
Get her in mind ;

But when they fix'd their love,
By all the powers above,
To them he false did prove,
As you shall find.
When some few months, alas !
In courtship they had past,
Their hearts were linked fast
In a lasting love.
Cupid had play'd his part,
And sent a flaming darr,
To wound each other's heart,
Which none could move.
But see the wretched fate
Of her father's hate.
He strove to separate
Them, you shall hear ;
And would not yield, he said,
Tho he had promised,
This gentleman should wed
His daughter fair.
Pray sir, he often cry'd,
Why must I be deny'd,
Of this my charming bride,
I so much love ?
If that unkind you are
To part this loving pair,
We're ruin'd I declare,
Then kinder prove.
Her father then did say,
Young man, think you I pray,
That I will throw away
My daughter so ?
Her fortune is too great
For one of your estate.
Therefore stand not to prate,
My mind you know.
Then in great discontent
He to this lady went,
And sadly did lament
This his hard fate ;
Saying, dear lady bright,
I'm ruin'd, ruin'd quite ;
Your father me doth slight
And proves most base.
He'll not consent, he cry'd,
That you should be my bride,
Oh ! what will me betide ?
I am undone ;
Now I have fix'd my love,
He most unkind doth prove.
Pity, ye powers above,
A poor young man,

Then did he sadly weep,
Grieving and sighing deep,
And at his lady's feet
Fell in a sound :
This griev'd her to the heart,
Of love she felt the smart,
As in the ensuing part
Soon will be found.
When thus this lady fair,
Beheld her lover dear,
She us'd her utmost care
Him to revive ;
And often, often cry'd,
If I am you deny'd,
I'll have no one beside,
As I'm alive.
Then did the tears apace
Run trickling down her face,
And did him oft embrace
Upon the floor ;
Wretched father, said she,
Is this your love to me ?
I shall now ruin'd be
For evermore.
As from his swoon he come,
With a deep sigh and groan,
He cry'd, Undone, undone,
My dear, am I ;
My love is just and true,
And if I have not you,
I'll bid the world adieu,
Eternally.
These words she did express,
My love is nothing less,
I freely must confess,
It is most true :
But if my father he
Will not to it agree,
I cannot marry'd be,
Dear sir, to you.
I will most constant prove,
No other will I love,
Witness, ye gods above,
To what is said ;
Rise, cease for to lament,
And strive to be content,
For without his consent
I dare not wed.
When she these word did speak,
He sigh'd as if his heart would
Saying, Love, for thy sake [break,
Ruin'd am I.

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Ruin'd am I.

I'll ask no more than this,
Give me one parting kiss
Now farewell earthly bliss
Eternally.
Then from her he did go,
With a heart full of woe,
To work his overthrow,
Resolutely ;
Some poison strong he took,
Which quickly did him work,
So he this would forgo
Most wickedly.
When this news to her came,
She grieved for the same,
And said, He was to blame
Himself to kill ;
She to her father run,
And cry'd, O cruel man,
See, see, what you have done
By your ill-will.
Like one distracted she
Lamented bitterly,
And said, Dear love, for thee
would I had dy'd,
Declare it now I shall
I'm ruin'd by his fall ;
I lov'd him best of all
The world beside.
Thus day and night she'd cry,
My love why didst thou die,
And leave me wretchedly
Behind you here ?
O come, dear ghost, to me,
And let me once more see,
That comely face, said she,
I lov'd so dear.
As she one night did lie,
Weeping most bitterly,
She heard a voice to cry,
My dear, my dear,
For your sweet sake I dy'd,
Who should have been my bribe,
Behold at your bed-side
I'm here, I'm here.
At which the curtain she
Put by immediately,
And the pale ghost did see
At her bed-side ;
He cloathed was in white,
Holding a torch so bright,
And when she saw the sight
She shriek'd and cry'd.
The ghost then thus did speak,
I died for your sake,
'Twas love my heart did break,
Most certainly :
The morning-cock I fear,
Won't let me long stay here,
Therefore come now prepare
To go with me.

The ghost a dead man's skull
Did hold, with poison full,
Saying, come drink your fill
Of this black cup ;
'Twill love-sick passions cure,
I've drank the same before,
And so have hundreds more ;
Then take it up,
She took it, saying, Love,
By all the powers above,
This shall my witness prove
I love you well ;
Now I will go, she said,
And in your grave be laid,
In sweet Elisian shade
Our souls will dwell.
She instantly arose,
Surrounded all with woes,
And with the ghost she goes
Down to the gate ;
Whereat a coach did stand,
With many a serving-man,
With torches in their hand,
That they did wait.
Being put in a coach,
With her beloved ghost,
Most swiftly they did post
Unto the grave ;
To which he strait did hie,
Saying, Love, here I lie,
Then quickly, quickly die,
'Tis that I'd have.
Vanishing all away,
They left her there to stay,
'Till the approaching day,
Among the tombs :
She sadly did lament,
Her cries to Heaven sent ;
And said, Ghost, be content,
I'll come, I'll come :
The poison wreck'd her heart,
Working in ev'ry part,
Working in ev'ry part,
The wound had gave ;
In woeful misery,
She did expecting lie
Each minute for to die,
Upon the grave,
As in this state she lay,
Until the silent day,
A young man pass'd that way,
And her did know ;
Fair lady, to me tell
What chance has you befall ?
I fear you are not well,
That you lie so.
Then she declar'd what pass'd,
From first unto the last,
And said, Young man, make haste,
And run with speed.

Unto my father dear,
Who has been so severe,
Oh ! bid him quick come here,
Ere I am dead.
Her father came and found
Her lying on the ground,
And ready was to swoon
At this sad sight :
She cry'd, Dear father, I
For love here now must die :
'Tis your severity
Has kill'd me quite.
Death wrecks in ev'ry place,
And flares me in the face ;
Dear grave, I'll thee embrace,
So lovingly ;
Dear love, come open wide
Thy arms for thy dear bride ;
I come, I come, she cry'd,
And so did die.
Her father grieved sore,
Hugging her o'er and o'er,
Ye Heavens ! I implore,
Let me too die.
Then with a dagger sharp
He struck him to the heart,
His life did then depart
Immediately.
O cruel death severe,
What a sad sight was here ?
Father and daughter dear
Thus for to die ;
Their sad and dismal fall
Lamented was by all,
And did for pity call,
From ev'ry eye.
Then home they were convey'd
With speed, as it is said,
And both in state were laid,
In a large hall.
Which thousands came to see,
Hearing this tragedy,
That might a warning be,
To lovers all,
By all, both rich and poor,
They lay lamented o'er,
About a week or more,
In mournful state ;
Many a lover dear,
Many a lady fair,
In mourning did appear,
For their sad fate.
A hearse and six with speed,
Provided were indeed,
Many in mourning weeds
Did it attend ;
Her grave was made close by,
Where her love did die ;
And so of this tragedy
I make an end.